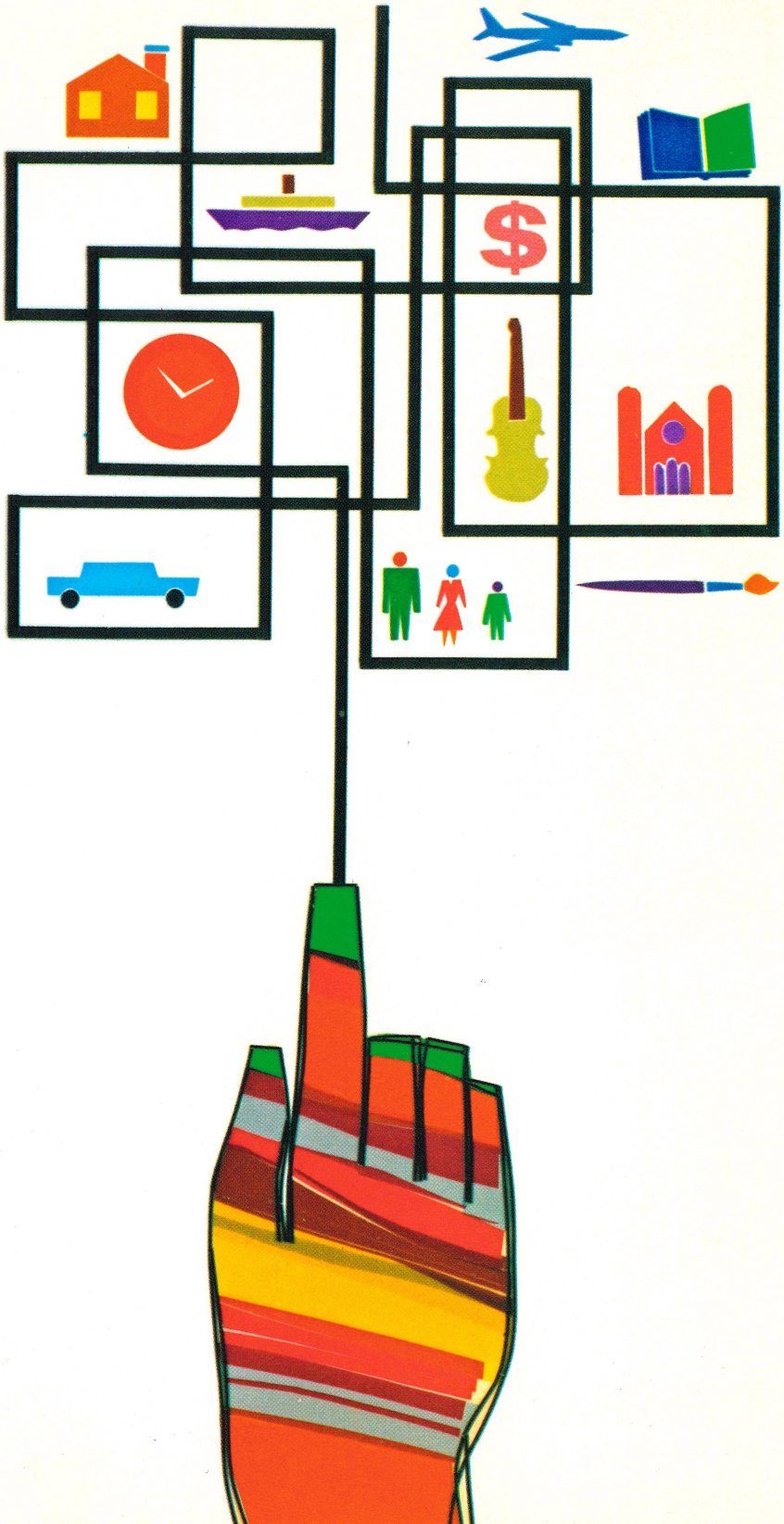
September-October, 1966 MEDICAL MISSIONARY



## CULTURE

Culture is man's expression of his humanity. There are countless ways of being a man, each of them unique. A people's way of living is as personal, as intimate, as dear to them as their very spirit. Their culture is the breath they breathe. It is something they inhale and exhale, inherit and shape, receive and give again enriched to each new generation. Culture flourishes in an atmosphere of freedom, peace and respect. It paints with its particular hue the world's splendor, sounds with its particular note the world's harmony. But it gives up its secret only to the heart wide open. The increase of cultural exchange in these times is our unique chance to build peace on earth through understanding, loving and encouraging its rich diversity. □ by SISTER M. LAWRENCE

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# MEDICAL MISSIONARY

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*Cover: Young Adibasi girls dance in formation at a village festival near Mandar, India.*

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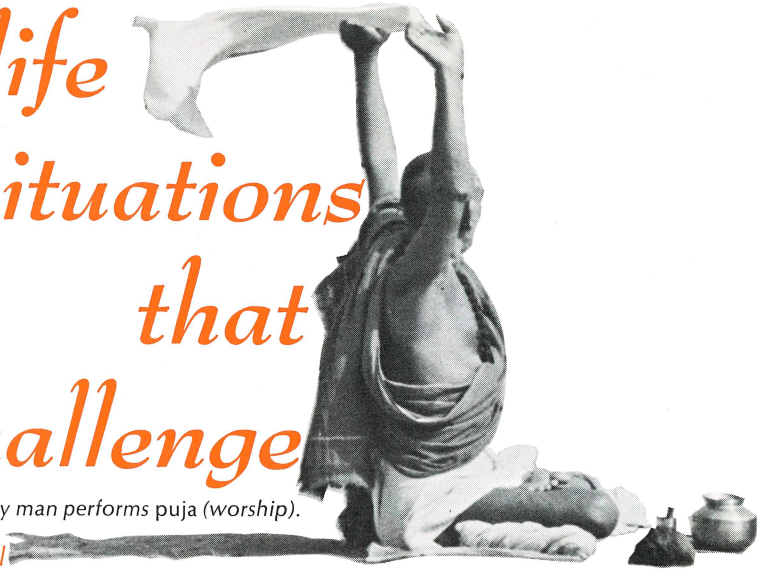
# life situations that challenge



*A Hindu holy man performs* puja *(worship).*

*By Sister M. Paul*

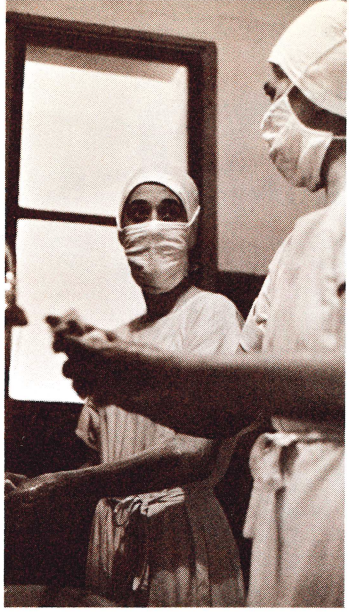
Every Sister-doctor who begins work in a land like India is bound to be struck by many new things despite the amount of time she has spent in preparing, in studying the customs and beliefs of a people.

The religious background of Hinduism, the climate, the education, the mores, the degree of information which the common man possesses and numerous other factors combine to present a world much different in its reaction to life from the one we have been raised in. Our education and professional formation have taught us many set standards. Very soon after starting medical work in India, we begin meeting life situations that challenge standards and appear at first to present insurmountable obstacles.

"Doctor, the patient and *sathi* (relative) refuse to sign the operation permit." I was told this one morning by one of our Sister-nurses. She was referring to a critically ill woman admitted during the night. Her words were disturbing, to say the least. Surgery, and as soon as possible, was absolutely essential to save the life of the patient. Even half a day's delay would bring her chance of recovery close to nil. We were trying to restore life—why did the family insist on death? My thoughts were interrupted by the head nurse, one of our Indian graduates, who came hurrying into the room.

"They agree, Doctor—now, they agree." Knowing how hard Sister had worked to explain the need for the operation, my immediate question was, "What made them change their mind?" "Very simple," Miriam replied with a broad smile, "The *sathi* told me that it was impossible for them to agree to surgery today. According to their horoscope, it was not a propitious day. So, I just told them, 'but it is doctor's propitious day.' At once they agreed, realizing that the heavier responsibility lay on doctor's shoulders."

Because she understood both her people and us so well, this little nurse was able to bring the patient the benefit of the treatment so much needed. She made me realize all the more that we have to keep our mind open, ready to discover any new avenue to help



*Sister M. Paul, M.D. author, and Sister M. Frederic, M.D. (right) scrub before surgery.*

*Sister M. Frederic, M.D.*

bridge the cultural gap between East and West.

Another day, at morning report, the night supervisor ended her resumé of the night's happenings with a casual—"and Shanti Devi had triplets. The first born at 3:45 A.M. Uncomplicated delivery by the midwife." Well, triplets are not a daily occurrence anywhere in the world. One of the O.B. specialists during my internship in New Jersey used to say wistfully, "I have been practicing obstetrics for 30 years. The last dream of my life will be accomplished the day I deliver triplets!"

So it was hard for me not to laugh when I realized that last night a patient had come into our hospital, delivered triplets and was taken care of by our good Indian midwife without any thought of awakening me. True, from a technical point of view, there was no need. According to the British system and all over Europe, the midwife handles most of the uncomplicated obstetrical cases. To an American-trained doctor, however, not to be called for the delivery of triplets comes as a bit of a shock . . . and points up another area calling for adaptation.

I was to learn more from the triplet case. Very shortly after delivery, we noticed a strange attitude in the mother and relatives, a total refusal to cooperate. The three babies were alive all right but premature, 2½ pounds, 2¼ pounds, and 3 pounds, two girls and one boy. If they were to live, it would take a lot of care. We got busy at once with the feeding, but it soon became apparent that our efforts were not appreciated. Then the head nurse reported, "The sathi wants to take the patient and the babies home immediately. Everyone looks very upset. The mother is crying and seems terrified." We, of course, felt very strongly that if the triplets had a chance to survive at all, they had to be kept in the hospital for quite a while. We made every effort to explain but were met by a stone wall, complete refusal. Something was very definitely behind the whole situation—but what?

A short time later, Sister Lucy, one of our Indian Sister-midwives, came back with the answer. Ac-

*and Sister M. Paul, M.D. (right) team up to change a dressing on this burn contracture case.*

cording to the belief of the area, to bear triplets is a very bad omen for the village. The mother is thought to be possessed by the devil and accordingly, she must be exorcised in the village as soon as possible. No amount of arguing made any impression. We were facing an impasse and all the good will in the world was not sufficient to change the situation.

The poor girl was taken to the village where everyone looked at her and the babies with resentment, since they were bearers of bad luck. Later our Sisters on a public health tour in the village found out that the two girls had died and it was questionable as to whether the boy would survive. A few weeks later the family hut was deserted. The pressure of the village group was so great that the woman had to move to another area where she hoped the news of the triple birth would not have preceded her.

Diet is another aspect of life in a hospital which is most striking for a new doctor. What a surprising sight to watch a line of people entering the gate each morning at 11:00 A.M. with all types of food containers on their heads or in their hands. The Hindu believer is very careful to follow a set ceremonial for cooking. It is very important for him to know that no one outside his belief has touched his food. This would contaminate it. For many of our patients it would be unthinkable to accept meals from our institution. How are they to know that everything has been done according to accepted religious methods?

Here again, even though it often means added worry as to whether the proper diet is really provided for the patient, the hospital personnel, doctors and nurses, must take time to explain to the relatives what type of food has been ordered and why. It is time-consuming and demanding, yet it would be refusing a necessary adaptation to impose on the patient the necessity of taking blindly the food we provide.

This matter of diet presents particular difficulties in some diseases where the type and amount of food are vital factors in treatment. For example, in diabetes mellitus,

*Patients wait their turn in the Out-Patient Department at Holy Family Hospital, Patna.*

it is next to impossible to expect the villager to change his basic diet as would be the treatment of choice. We have to be very realistic. Many of our poor patients (in Patna they comprise about 85% of our cases) are totally incapable of affording a refined diet and the daily insulin dose. Also, many do not have the required understanding to assure control of a disease like diabetes. In such cases, where there is no substitute treatment, we face the real pain of being unable to help some patients.

Yet there are other cases where a second best can be used and we should be ready to accept it. In Patna, treatment often has to be adapted to the patient at hand. In America this statement is true no doubt, but one is seldom faced with the necessity of choosing an apparent second rate treatment. Let us consider peptic ulcer, for example. I have seen numerous male patients with the so-called "classical" picture of the disease.

**"Man, who senses his responsibility for the progress of culture, nourishes a high hope but also looks with**

Often, the patient is a laborer in his forties who has never been treated, yet has been afflicted with pain for 10 to 12 years. Doctors know that the proper and acceptable thing to do is to first place the patient on a strict ulcer diet, to repeat X-ray examinations let us say six weeks later, and to treat the patient with medication as long as possible provided there are no complications. Milk which is basic for the treatment considered is for many of our Indian villagers, a rare commodity. It explains why so many mothers keep on breast feeding their children up to two or three years. They would have no other milk to offer their little ones. How can a village farmer obtain what he needs when his own children rarely taste such an expensive food. In his case it is better treatment to offer the relief of surgery as soon as possible. In another setup this would appear to be jumping over necessary steps and one might be accused of being too quick to impose a major surgical procedure.

Cancer of the cervix—stage one, presents another example of the importance to adapt one's set of principles to a people's thinking and way of life. It is true that in literature on the subject, most physicians agree that radium should be used. Yet after we review the situation in our area with our poor patients we often find that:
1) many do not understand the importance and urgency of treatment since they do not feel much discomfort; 2) they often discontinue the follow-up, feeling that "nothing is happening;" 3) for many, it means traveling maybe 10 to 40 miles or more to go to the cancer clinic. Forty miles is not such a great distance in our society, 10 miles is even less, but if your only means of transportation is walking or at best, taking an overcrowded third class train, it is a long, long way. The factor of distance often makes repeated visits prohibitive. Since we have learned from experience that the failure to follow up has had such serious effects for these patients, we feel now that a primary surgical procedure may well be "the" treatment of choice.

One last example will further illustrate the point. In the treatment of the type of cancer of the rectum for which in the United States the only recognized satisfactory procedure would require a permanent colostomy, we must often be content with a less drastic measure. We know that the majority of our patients, after receiving a full explanation about a colostomy, would take their possessions and go home, rather than submit to the treatment. Because of this attitude which will not change overnight, we have decided that in any case in which it is technically possible, resection and re-anastomosis should be done. At home, it might be called second-rate surgery. At the present time, for our people it is, in most cases, giving them a chance of survival with less suffering.

Through the events of every day and by many avenues, one is constantly being taught that when facing a patient in a particular corner of the world, it is the whole person with his beliefs, background, fear, education, information, that must be treated. It is well and good and necessary to know the ideal and strive to apply it, but it would be less than good, often downright unjust, to refuse to accept the patient *as he is* and respond accordingly.

"Literature and the arts have much to do with revealing man's place in history and in the world; with illustrating his miseries and joys, his needs and strengths.

By Margaret Plass

# the goldweights

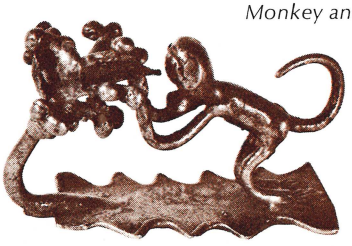
The highly imaginative goldweights of the Ashanti tribe of West Africa stand today as one of the art forms of Ghana. Cast in richly varied shapes of brass and usually less than 2½ inches high, these miniatures have passed through the palms of kings and matched their weights against the finest gold in what was formerly called the Gold Coast. To trace the origin of these tiny brass weights is tantamount to tracing the origins of the tribe that produced them.

Today the great West African rain forest lies heavy along the Guinea Coast of Africa as over most of the great basin of the wide, shallow, meandering Niger River, a fastness within which most of the famous sculpture of Africa has been produced. Linguists tell us that many of the most important art-producing tribes have been settled in their present forest habitat for several thousand years. Those who know West Africa do not wonder at this, for the bush is a potent influence toward stability and continuity by virtue both of its impenetrability when it is left standing as primeval forest and of its luxuriant fertility when it is converted to agriculture (as most West African tribes have now transformed it).

But there is one region in Ghana where the northern savannah—higher, drier, more open — has driven a broad wedge of open scrub country through the rain forest to the sea. Here, through the centuries and the millennia, the story has been one of turmoil, of conquest and of great tribal movements and migrations.

In this West African land between two steaming, impenetrable forests, no important tribes seem to have a very ancient status. The two which have made the greatest mark on history—the Fon people of Dahomey and the Ashanti of Ghana—came to the region and to power only in the last few centuries. The Ashanti, whose little weights for measuring gold dust and gold nuggets are the topic of our concern, came not (as one might suppose) from the ancient kingdom of Ghana, whose name was appropriated by the newly independent Gold Coast of 1957, but from farther to the east. The tribal movements of those times were so extraordinarily complicated that it is not yet possible to trace the paths and vicissitudes of their indomitable progress to the sea. At a later stage, however, about three centuries ago, the Ashanti subdued and advanced through the territory of their more pacific and artistic Negro relatives, the Bron people of the kingdom of Takyiman (now Techiman). It seems that the Bron may have introduced some respect for art into the culture of their militaristic victors, once they had established themselves in what is now Ashanti country, much as Greece made a cultural conquest of Rome, after the Roman warriors overran the Greek city-states and

*A proverb weight. "Cut off the head of a snake and the rest is rope."*



*Monkey and coconuts.*

# of the ashantis

*Mrs. Margaret Plass, an authority on African art, is honorary curator of African art at the University of Pennsylvania Museum and a fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. She is the only American and only woman in the British Museum's Department of Ethnography.*

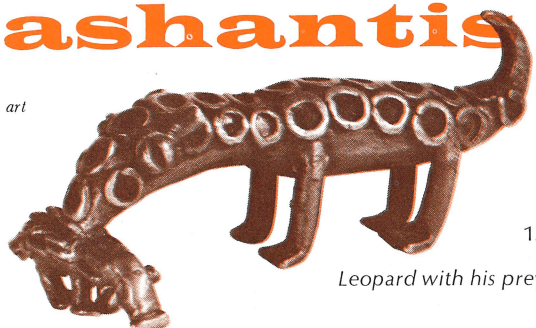
plundered their temples for marble status symbols.

We do not know whether the Ashanti drive to the sea had for its main purpose the occupation of the extensive gold mines of the area, but most certainly the culture soon became gold-oriented. Within the past few centuries, up until World War II, the acquisition of gold became the occupation and preoccupation of the Ashantis. With primitive tools, slaves hacked out the gold-bearing rock which everywhere surrounded them. Naked in the steaming heat they panned the shining metal from the stony beds of the many shallow streams and, at the end of the day, carried it all to their masters—the *Ashantehene,* the Queen Mothers, the big and little chiefs—the nobility of this prosperous and powerful royal court. The Queen Mother was quite literally felt to be the spiritual mother of her people, as the *Ashantehene* was the all-powerful father, and on their physical well-being depended the life-force, health and happiness of the tribe. The gold that sustained their lives of luxury and power was their just due.

Bowdich, in his splendid book, *A Mission to Ashantee* (London, 1819), tells of the wealth, the cleanliness and the golden splendor of the kingdom of Ashanti. Already in Bowdich's day, Europeans were charmed by the gold accoutrements of royal personages, by the small brass weights used to measure out the gold dust and nuggets and by the beautifully cast little boxes of bronze in which every moneyed Ashanti kept his gold. Coins, as we know them, were not in use in Ashantiland until about the time of World War I, and then only in the coastal towns.

Close to the palace in the *Ashantehene's* capital of Kumasi were the streets occupied by the woodcarvers, the drum-makers, the musicians, and especially, the courtyards occupied by the goldsmiths, the royal workers in gold and leather. These goldsmiths of Ashantiland claimed descent from one Fusu Kwabi, the first member of their craft, who was reputed to have come from heaven to teach men to cast gold. The goldsmiths' guilds, appendages of every *omanhene's* and the *Ashantehene's* court, were royally entitled to work the gold and make the royal ornaments and insignia of members of the court. They also cast the brass counterweights, the gold dust boxes, the spoons and scoops required to measure the gold, and they balanced the small scales called *nframa nsenia,* literally wind scales, so delicate that even a small breeze would make them fluctuate.

Gold quickly became a royal symbol and members of the goldcasters guild kept their skills in their own families. When a son succeeded his father in the guild, he inherited his father's equipment: a large collection of carefully graded counterweights, the scales, a number of spoons for lifting gold dust to the pan of the





*Leopard with his prey in his mouth.*

scales, simple scoops for lifting large quantities of the gold dust, and brass boxes of various shapes and sizes to hold the gold dust and nuggets. He kept his stock carefully wrapped in a white cloth and then in the skin of a certain gold-colored antelope. The larger and more varied the stock of weights, the more popular the goldsmith.

Not only did merchants need the scales and weights and boxes for their sales, but their patrons must also have a similar set of equipment in order to check on the metal content of the weights. There is an Ashanti proverb: "The weights of the king are heavier than those of a common man." It is a logical proverb in Ashantiland where, on the occasion of a royal gift of gold to another of high rank, the king needed heavier weights in order to provide small extra gifts of gold to courtiers in attendance.

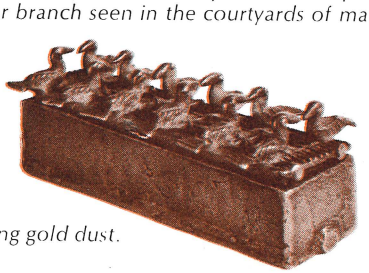
Certainly no nobleman could be expected to carry his gold about with him. A bearer or bearers always accompanied him on expeditions from his own compound, carrying the box of gold dust, a set of weights, and a small pair of scales in order to pay for his master's purchases in the pure soft gold of the realm.

The most useful systems of weights and measures seem to be based on common and readily accessible units of standards, such as the last joint of the human thumb, the inch, or the foot. The basic unit in the Ashanti system of weights was the tiny red seed of the *abrus precatorius,* a tree found very widely in the tropics and much used in decorative work by tribal artists in Africa, Oceania, and South and Central America. The smallest brass weight weighed approximately as much as 10 *abrus* seeds and was worth a shilling; the largest was worth about 80 in 1905.

To cast a goldweight, the lost wax method was employed. It was an ancient process, used by the ancient Egyptians, the Bronze Age Europeans, the pre-Classical Greeks and the pre-Columbian Americans to cast small animals and figures for religious shrines. In the casting of such a small object as a goldweight, the beeswax model of the weight was simply encased thickly in its clay cocoon and baked, the wax "lost" and replaced by molten brass or sometimes other metals. Very often a small "tail" is found on a weight, the remains of the pouring channel for the metal.

The naive charm of these naturalistic or geometric little brass weights has come to qualify them as a really important art form. Many of them exhibit the supposedly new open style of the modern European and American sculptor, in which the space enclosed by volumes is as rhythmically important as the volumes themselves. The weights are still available today, and at least comparatively inexpensive in the art markets of Europe and America.

*A ritual libation at the "*Nyame*-tree." Nyame (the Supreme Being) tree is a 3-pronged sapling or branch seen in the courtyards of many Ghanaian houses.*





*Ornate box for carrying gold dust.*

# there's always a reason

*By Sister M. Lourdes*

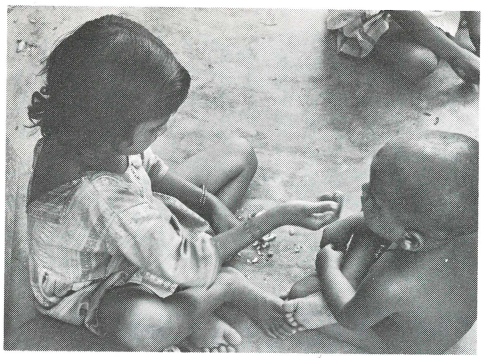
The dusty road to St. Michael's Hospital is a bullock cart throughway flanked on both sides by peaceful green rice fields interrupted only by occasional foot paths. This is a farming district where you tell the time of the year by the height of the rice and the time of the day by the site of the sun. This is Mymensingh. It is where our people live and die. It is where we work to lessen the pains of life and death.

The farmer of Bengal lives with his family in a one-room bamboo hut with a hard mud floor. Instead of city blocks these *bashas* are grouped in a circle and create a closely knit unit known as a *bari*. Here several brothers or cousins may live with their wives and children, their parents and in-laws. Every playmate is a *bhai* (brother) and if in later years a young man moves to the city, the place of his birth is still "his *bari*."

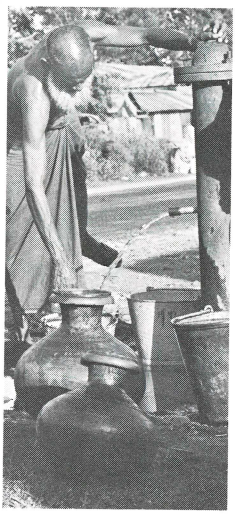
As you push aside the overhanging banana leaves and make your way into a *bari* you realize that you are entering into another civilization. This is no apartment house where the only thing shared in common is a given area or space. This is a way of life established years ago and passed on to his sons by that patriarch squatting in front of his *basha*. He knows every inch of his fields. So do his sons, who now till the soil as the old man's father had taught him to do.

The grinding of the spices by the women also admits of little change and so it is only natural that the *buri* (old woman) is the sage of the household arts. She is equally infallible in matters regarding the birth of her first great-grandchild. It is she who decides that all the young girl needs is a little more time and a little more pain and the baby will be born in the *bari* just as her children had been. When

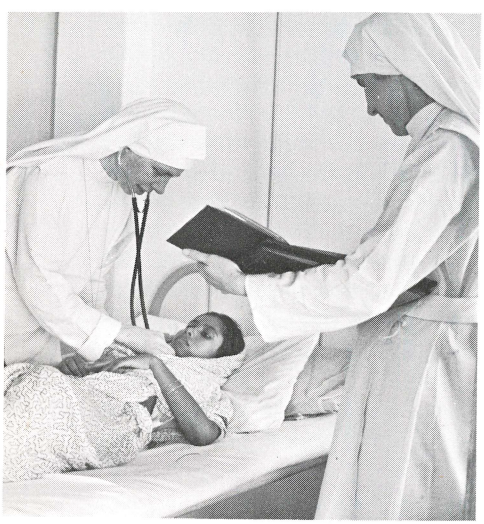
*Every playmate is a brother.*



*The pushkarini, a place to bathe and wash your hair.*



*The village pump, a source of safe drinking water.*



*Sister M. Claude, M.D., and Sister M. Michaela on morning rounds.*

accepted *bari* (and often barbarous) methods fail and the young mother is exhausted, talk of a hospital may begin to make the rounds. But it is the old woman who decides, not the husband. The pathetic figure on the litter viewed by the Sister at 3 a.m. in the hospital emergency room is not a neglected case. She has not once been alone throughout those long days and nights. She has in fact been surrounded by the only people she really knows and trusts. Her stillborn child and her own physical state are not viewed as a mistake, but as one of the inevitable sorrows of life.

Village news has never depended on mass media, and yet it travels at a speed incomprehensible to us. There are no washlines over which two women can chat, but the Bengal version of the laundromat is a sure source of news. The century-old custom of washing by the river eliminates Bendix washers and turns the whole business into a lively social affair. Man-made reservoirs, or *pushkarinies,* as they are called, punctuate the countryside and provide a swimming hole for the children as well as the community bathing and laundry facilities. Into water up to their necks the women glide in their six yards of *sari* and are soon surrounded by soap bubbles. Clothes and self, including hair, are quickly washed and they emerge amid a flurry of chatter. Their only other *sari* is then placed over the wet one and with seemingly little effort the wet one is removed and stretched in the sun to dry. There is no other "family laundry" to be done. The men of the *bari* will come to the *pushkarini* at another time of the day and repeat the performance with their *longies,* a circular cloth that reaches from waist to ankle. There are no baby clothes to wash,

**"May the Faithful live in very close union with the other men of their time and may they strive to understand**

since they are convinced that God has suitably clothed His little ones. When the *saris* of the women are dry, waist-length hair is knotted at the nape of the neck. The final act unfortunately is to dip the family water jar into the *pushkarini* to secure the day's supply of drinking water. In town, water taps are turned on at certain times during the day and relatively safe drinking water is available. But the taps are far away and the germ theory not understood by our people. The result is endemic dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis.

These *pushkarinies* offer a still greater hazard. The piercing cries of a mother carrying a drowned child in her arms and followed by a wave of villagers is so characteristic that the Sister dispensing medicines or seated at the microscope knows what has happened before she goes to the door. Like any hospital, we give all we have to help each one. Some we save, others we have to hand back to a bereaved and often soaking wet mother or father.

There is a rickshaw driver in Mymensingh who ran like this to us not once, but twice. The first time he carried his daughter, aged three, whom we revived. A few months later it was his four-year-old son who was dead when he arrived at the hospital. I think I know your reaction, but believe me, you cannot judge this situation until you have visited a bari and seen the number of children that swarm around one mother; until you understand that these *pushkarinies* are a part of their everyday life, a scene of great activity and therefore of great interest to a child who can so easily lose his balance in his bare feet as he picks his way around the muddy bank.

As the sun sets over the *baris,* fires are lit and the evening meal of boiled rice and carefully seasoned curry is prepared. The stoves are not waist high but low open fires best tended in a squatting position and easily reached by little hands that know no fear of boiling water. Burns are common and understandable. But infected burns and contractures with resulting deformities are more difficult to understand. However there is a reason for these also. Modern medicine is familiar to us and we automatically turn to it in illness. So too, these people turn to what is familiar to them. The mother of this child has seldom, if ever, wandered far from her village. She is bound by the law of *purda* (seclusion of women) which does more than cover her with a *burkah* (a long garment that conceals a woman's face). It closes her mind to anything different. She spends part of her day making cow dung cakes as fuel for the fire. The father has little or no formal education and is familiar only with the medicine of the village doctor. The baby has been carried on somebody's hip every minute, since carriages, cribs, or playpens are not used. To take a crying child from his *bari* and place him in the hands of strangers when home remedies will do is close to impossible for our village people. Their limited horizon does not include this and we must understand it.

But it is not unsolvable. Grandma might come to see us some day in less extenuating circumstances. If she gets a smile and a little relief for her rheumatism, she may return with her daughter who has fever. Word will go round as the fires are lit and the *saris* are dried in the sun. But it takes time. While they talk, contractures grow worse, malaria weakens and typhoid kills. But when they do come, you know you have been tried and not found wanting.

*By Sister M. Mercedes*

The Warao Indians of Venezuela have always been a peace-loving people. Their very existence today attests to their non-warlike behavior. Their neighbors, the Arawaks and Caribe nations, defended their lands against all aggressors, and as a result, were completely destroyed by or assimilated into the conquering civilizations. The Warao, retreating from their land, were driven into the swampy, river-criss-crossed jungle of the Amacuro Delta. Since this land was so undesirable, their pursuers left them there in peace. They adapted so well to the environment that they became *Wa-arao* "people of the water."

The Amacuro Delta of the Orinoco River lies in the eastern part of Venezuela. This river, one of the largest in the world, divides itself into 2,436 known rivers, rivulets and brooks as it cuts through the Warao country. It empties into the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Paria through 20 mouths along a coastline of 278 kilometers. Romulo Gallegos, one of Venezuela's foremost writers, describes this area in the following manner.

*Orinoco Delta, the fruitful end of a long journey whose beginning is still unknown . . . dividing her riches among her children and saying good-bye to them as they begin their great adventure toward the sea: strong ones tossing spray on all sides, audacious rivulets decidedly marching on their way, adolescents still dreamily advancing slowly on their journey and tiny ones that remain asleep among the green mangrove forests.*

Our Caripito hospital is the closest modern hospital to the Delta. Over the years, interest in the Warao and their way of life has grown and developed among the Sisters. Recently we were able to take a trip and see for ourselves the area, the people and their customs.

## THE WARAO HOUSE

The Warao house consists of a thickly thatched peaked roof reaching to within a few feet of the ground and a log floor. There are no walls. The house is perched on stilts at least four feet above the river bank. Here the Indians live and sleep. At a short distance from

# people of the water

**"The growth of communication between the various nations and social groups opens more widely to all, the treasures of different cultures."** The Church in Modern World

this house and always directly over the water is another house where the cooking is done. The stove is simple, consisting of a baked mud mound on which the fire is built. Cleanliness is no problem in this kitchen for the log floor has many open spaces.

The house might seem bare to us for the only furniture known to the Warao are the basket which hangs from the supporting beams of the house and the hammock, or *chinchorro,* in which he sleeps. In quite a few houses we could count as many as 30 *chinchorros.* They all belong to the same family. When a girl marries the couple takes up residence in the house of her parents. Each family unit has its separate section of the house with all the *chinchorros* slung in neat lines.

## DIVISION OF LABOR

As with most peoples, the Warao consider any work connected with the home as belonging to the woman. *Ocumo,* a starchy root vegetable, is cultivated close to the house and the woman is responsible for providing this food for her family. She also prepares the *morocoto* fish that her husband has caught and collects firewood. To collect firewood, a big event in her life, she joins a group of women and girls who take a large dugout and spend the entire day in the jungle, gathering logs and enjoying the delicacies that the forest has to offer. This work absorbs much of her time. Not only must firewood be provided for cooking but also for the small fire maintained under each *chinchorro.* This small fire is kept smoldering all night in order to keep away the mosquitoes and other insects that molest one's sleep.

*Chinchorros* are made of *moriche* palm fiber and the woman must keep her family supplied with them. To make a *chinchorro* takes at least two months of steady daily work. First the fiber must be removed from the palm leaves and then these soft fibers are boiled and bleached in the sun. Thread, almost as strong as nylon and as soft as angora, is made to whatever thickness desired by rolling various numbers of fibers together. When sufficient thread has been col-

(*continued on next page*)

lected, the woman of the house begins to weave the *chinchorro*. It takes an expert weaver at least one month to weave an adult sized *chinchorro*. Because of their softness, durability and strength Warao *chinchorros* are greatly prized. The Indians, unaware of the value of money, willingly sell for about $5.00 the product of two months' hard labor.

The men are responsible for collecting wild honey and for fishing. There are several ways for them to fish. Some do it with harpoons, some with bows and arrows. The method I saw is most ingenious and certainly entails very little work. The fisherman fills his small dugout with tubular palm wood floats caulked on one end. To this end is attached a nylon or *moriche* fiber line and a hook. On reaching the spot where he will fish, he tosses the floats into the water and retires to a shady spot along the bank to wait. When a float begins to bob, he rows to it and winds up the line. As his catch nears the surface, he clubs it with a pole. An average size *morocoto* fish weighs 20 pounds and has a delicious white meat.

The making and the repairing of the houses and dugouts are done by the men. When not working the Warao relaxes in his *chinchorro* or amuses himself by making and playing musical instruments. The Warao Indians have wind instruments made from calabashes, trumpets made from bam-

## A CREATION MYTH ACCORDING TO

Translated by Sister M. Mercedes

*Many stars appeared and disappeared there in the heavens during the passage of time, before the inhabitants of the world above the stars realized that the earth below the clouds existed.*

*Once upon a time a witch doctor* (wisidatu) *shot into the air the arrow of his thought, which landed a short distance away in a hole in the clouds. The* wisidatu *neared the spot in order to see where his desire had gone, and observed the tiny hole which cut completely through the clouds. Upon looking into the hole he could distinguish in the distance rivers, valleys and forests which, lit up by the brightness of the sun, extended as far as he could see.*

*Seeing that under his world existed a land exactly the same as that which he inhabited, the* wisidatu, *after admiring it, went to recount his discovery to the other inhabitants of the world above the stars. They came to the hole in order to see for themselves all that the* wisidatu *had related to them. Before their amazed eyes they saw all the palm trees of their forests in the world above the stars . . . the* moriche, *which clothes and feeds them . . . the* temiche, *whose leaves make the roofs of their houses . . . the* manaca, *whose heart is such a gourmet treat. They could see the enormous* saman *trees and the giant* ceiba *whose trunk is so thick that six men hand in hand cannot encircle it. They heard the gurgle of the waters full of big shimmering* morocoto *fish. They admired the brilliant plumage of the* quacamayos *and of the parrots, the grace of the white cranes that lazily*

boo sections, reed flutes and violins copied with such detail after European violins that it is difficult to realize that they are made by primitive Indians and have *moriche* fiber strings.

### HEALTH CONCEPTS

Along with most primitive peoples, the Warao believe that sickness is caused by spirits, or *jebus*. In order to enter the body the spirit must penetrate the skin. Dirt is a protection for the skin. Therefore, most Warao, while they like to swim and bathe in the cool clear water of the river, are loathe to remove their protective layer of dirt by using soap. When a Warao is unlucky enough to have a *jebu* inside of him, there is a special ceremony called "the removal of the *joa*" that must be performed. During this ceremony, a man gently massages the area affected by the *jebu* as all onlookers chant certain prescribed prayers.

### MOTHERHOOD TABOOS

During her confinement the woman stays in a separate house in a marshy area behind the village. Being ostracized from the community is not new to her. She has experienced it from puberty on each month. There are many taboos attached to this period during which the woman lives in this separate house. She may not eat the meat of large animals such as the tapir or turtle. The meat of animals caught with the help of

## WARAO LEGENDS

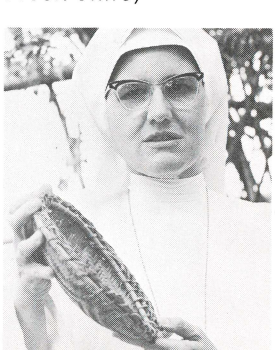
*crisscrossed the sky above the luxuriant valleys. "How can we reach all this?" they asked each other.*

*Finally they wove a heavy rope of* moriche *fibers by which they were able to let themselves down into this paradise, and they hunted, fished and ate of all the fruits of the trees. At night they climbed up their rope and slept in their* moriche *fiber* chinchorros *in their huts in the world above the stars.*

*But once a pregnant woman wanted to go down to the earth. She put her leg through the hole in the clouds, and because of her excessive size, became stuck in the hole. The people above the stars tried to pull her out, to no avail. The people below the clouds tried to push her in, to no avail.*

*The Warao from below can still see that curved leg of the woman stuck in the cloud. It gives the impression of a curved group of seven stars, called in Warao,* noji-ja-bari, *or the upturned leg.*

*Some of the people marooned in the world above the stars became jealous of the happy people inhabiting the earth beneath the clouds. They took the form of spirits of the forest or of the water. They are the cause of all the bad luck and sickness that beset the Warao in the* moriche*-filled forests of the Amacuro Delta.*



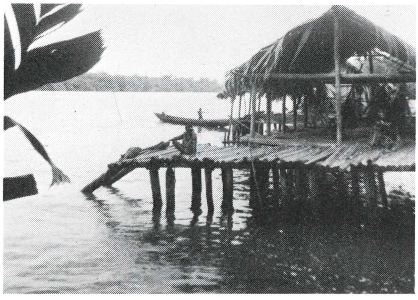
*Sister M. Mercedes has for the past 11 years been deeply interested in the Warao Indians of Venezuela and gathered many of their stories and myths. The above creation myth is her own translation.*

dogs is especially forbidden lest the dog never again be good for the chase. She may not eat food prepared for the community nor may she extinguish a fire. If she does, the pots used to prepare the food will lose their power to prepare healthful food and the fire will lose its power to warm. She may not touch boats, fishing gear or anything else connected with water, or the object will lose its power to do good.

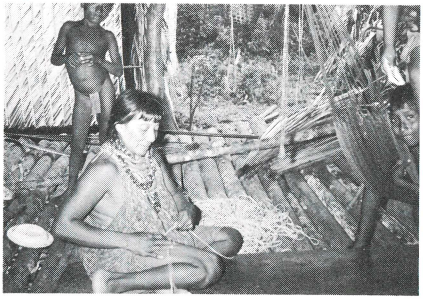
At puberty the girl's mother builds her a special, completely enclosed hut of *temiche* palm branches. Before the girl is led to the hut there is a community celebration. She remains there in pitch blackness from three to five days. When she emerges there is another festival, for the new *senorita* is now considered of marriageable age.

## LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

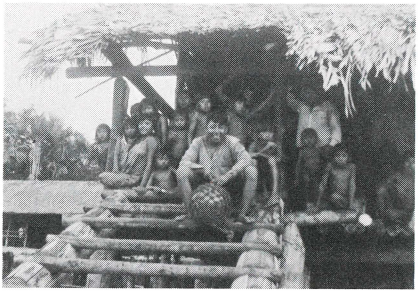
Far from dying out the Warao tribe is steadily increasing. The 1961 national census gave the Warao population of the Amacuro Delta as 13,000. This was a 5,000 increase over the previous census. Most of the Warao are responding favorably to the interest shown by the missionaries and government agents. Already most of the men use outboard motors to power the large *curiara* (dugouts). Villages hidden in the labyrinth of waterways are no longer isolated. The language has been studied by experts and, thanks to modern linguistic science, is now a written language. Children are encouraged to become literate in both Warao and Spanish. The assimilation of their culture into the dominant one will not mean the same for today's "people of the water" as it did centuries ago for the Arawak and Caribe tribes, their neighbors.



*Warao kitchen, built over the water and connected to the main house by a weed walk.*



*Weaving a* chinchorro *(hammock), a whole day's work.*



*Sometimes, as many as 30 people live in one house.*

*Preparing supper of boiled* ocumo. Moriche *palm fibers hang drying in the background.*

By Sister M. Rachel

# coming through loud and clear

*Sister M. Rachel examines the harmonium while Bert Gomes warms up on the* tablas.

"Sister, do you like Bengali music?" A simple question, yet it brought me to the threshold of a whole new world.

I was in the hospital as a patient, recovering from a bout of hepatitis, when one of our employees dangled the baited hook. "No, Bert," I replied. "I haven't heard enough of your music to really like it."

"Sister, you have time now," the musically gifted Bert Gomes insisted. "If I bring you a radio, will you listen to the music? The best thing is to try to pick out one instrument. Follow that instrument through the whole piece. When you have begun to hear a pattern and can follow your instrument through the piece, you will be able to understand our music. Perhaps then you will like it." As a born music lover, I had to agree the bait was enticing. So I bit.

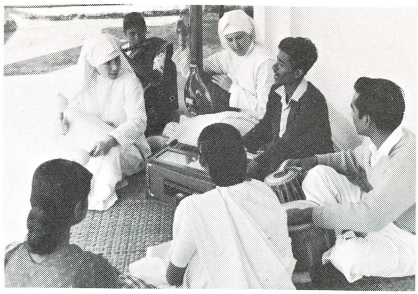
As I listened to Bert's radio the following afternoon, I decided to follow an instrument called the *tabla* which seemed, even to my untrained ear, the predominant one in almost every musical composition. When Bert explained what the instrument was and how it was played, I was fascinated. "Bert, I want to learn to play the *tablas*. Will you teach me?" His reply was graphic. There in the hospital lobby on Christmas morning, a beautiful set of *tablas* sat ready and waiting for me.

*Tablas* are drum-like instruments with a feel and characteristic all their own. The *duggie* or *baya,* made of clay and the skin of an animal (usually camel), is played with the left palm and finger tips, and creates a low "umph" sound. The other drum is called a *tabla* or *dahina.* It is made of wood and skin and is played by the index finger of the right hand. The other fingers are called into play with certain *tals* or *bols,* as they are called. A *bol* is a set pattern used only by the *tabla* player. The *dahina* can be tuned to pitch, whereas the *duggie* cannot.

My classes began with Bert playing the harmonium (a portable reed instrument that sounds like an organ) and counting the rhythm. DHA DHIN DHIN DHA-TETE DHIN DHA, he would beat out, over and over, as I weakly tapped the *tabla* with my right hand and pushed down on the *duggie* with the palm and finger tips of my left hand. It's like patting your stomach and rubbing your head at the same time! Many months and much patience later, the sound I was making emerged as a fairly clear tone. It was long, hard work for teacher and student, and I'm sure there were days when Bert pondered the wisdom of my ever having begun. But I had begun, and every day found me more and more involved.

A great deal was being done at the time in the study and composition of sacred music with Bengali music and notation. Talk was already in the air about a vernacular liturgy as a probable outcome of

*Sister Maria Goretti (left) and Sister M. Rachel, fingering the* tampura.



*Some of the staff at Holy Family Hospital, Dacca, join in a jam session with* tablas, tampura *and harmonium, the three instruments approved for liturgical use in Dacca.*

the Vatican Council. A group of dedicated people in Barisal, a small village in East Pakistan, had opened a school of oriental music in 1959 in order to pave the way for the changes certain to come. When the final "go-ahead" was sounded, this group had already written two Masses using the classical pattern of Bengali music and words. Lovely hymns began flowing through the villages and the demand grew daily for more composers and more songs.

Archbishop Graner, in conformity with the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, formed a sub-committee on sacred music for our Archdiocese of Dacca. I had the privilege of being appointed to this committee. We were immediately faced with many problems in our attempt to implement the Council's desire for indigenous sacred music. For example, most Bengali music is learned by memory. For those of us who depend on notes, this form of learning is difficult, if not downright impossible! The Bengalis do have a system of notation, but only those few trained in music can read it. Written in Bengali script without a staff, it looks something like this:

সা রে পা | রে মা ধা | সা পা গা | পা মা সা

The words follow directly below the notes. Fortunately, the Bengalis have very good memories and for centuries music has been handed down faithfully from teacher to student, preserving a very rich and beautiful style of music. It is not unusual, however, to hear the same song rendered by different choirs sometimes changed to an almost unrecognizable rhythm and tune. Our first objective then was to unify the hymns and Masses being sung by putting notes on paper, using the Bengali script.

The next problem was to decide what instruments could be used in Church. Expert advice was sought, and it was decided that the *tabla,* the harmonium and the *tampura* could be used.

Our third problem, perhaps the most pressing and certainly the hardest to solve, was the fact that there were very few Bengalis musically trained, and practically none trained to write and play sacred music. Young, talented people were not wanting, as was experienced by some of our own

**"The Church, living in various circumstances in the course of time, has used the discoveries of different cultures so that in her preaching she might spread and explain the message of Christ to all nations, that she might give it better expression in liturgical celebration."** The Church in the Modern World

employees in the hospital, but studying music takes time and money. The latter is particularly hard to come by in East Pakistan.

After my appointment to the Archdiocesan committee, I felt obliged to learn more about Bengali music. During my holiday, I went to India to take a course at the Hindustani School of Music in Mussorrie. Sister Maria Goretti eagerly joined me. I, of course, took *tabla* lessons; she took voice. By this time I could play fairly well, or at least keep a rhythm, and so I was able to learn quickly, thanks to Bert's untiring effort. Bengali music, however, is very complex and I knew I had a long way to go. It is a disciplined music based on definite patterns called *ragas,* within which the singer can improvise at will. When Sister Maria Goretti was well on her way to at least trying to improvise, she and I would occasionally pool our efforts. It sounded awful, but we loved it. At least we had spirit!

Examination time came and with it a new experience. To play the *tablas,* one sits cross-legged on a mat, and that alone takes practice. My examiners — six in all — were joined by my teacher and the student body, who came to cheer me to success. I was more than a little nervous. I was downright scared. Imagine, failing in front of all my Bengali classmates. If they hadn't been there, I might have been tempted to fake sickness or something. But there I was and there were my examiners, sitting across from me, also on mats. My name was called and I remembered what one of the students had told me: much counted on behavior. I tried to act calm and bowed slightly as I was told to sit down. Those were blessed words to hear. My knees were knocking so wildly I was sure they could pass for a set of *tablas!*

I was told to play a set pattern called a *bol.* The *bol* I chose was the one I had practiced most, a sixteen-beat classical *tin tal.* It must be played by memory and in time with the harmonium. If I happened to finish my *bol* before the harmonium stopped playing—zero!—plucked, as they say. The prayers of my fellow students were with me, though, and for five minutes my two hands responded as they should. After the examination, which took another fifteen minutes of oral questions, I could rejoice. The first hurdle was behind me. I knew I had many more years to go before mastering Bengali music, but still, it was satisfying to know that through this music I had discovered another patch of common ground, another form of communication, as it were, with the Bengali people, and they were coming through loud and clear.

# FRESH IMPETUS,

During the past few years, there has been a gradual de-glamorization of missionaries. No longer does the former "mystique" of adventure, risk and far-away places prevail. In most of the areas we refer to as "missions," young men and women of the Peace Corps, Papal Volunteers or members of some governmental agency like A.I.D. mingle with missionaries and share their lot and life. The aura of the unusual is gone. Gone too are those so-called "mission talks" which leaned too heavily on snake stories and graphic accounts of the hardships of life in the bush. Audiences today, even the very young, can and do ask pertinent questions about more important matters. Missionaries might have to answer questions on the economic status of India or the complexities of modern life in Pakistan. Through the eyes of T.V., the people to whom they are speaking have seen the streets of Bangkok, Cairo and Nairobi, so snake stories hardly satisfy. No one need mourn the loss. All of these factors are cause for rejoicing.

Another aspect of this changed attitude toward missionaries has taken place on the theological front. There has been a wonderful development of theological thought and widespread communication of it. This is particularly true of the deepened and expanded insight into the real meaning of the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Today's Catholics have a much better understanding of the relationship of these two sacraments and their own responsibility for the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth. They have a more accurate idea of the Church and how they share in its "mind, life and activity." Again,

# STRONGER LIGHT, MORE SAVORY SALT

*By Sister M. Richard*

this is matter for rejoicing.

From the point of view of the Church's success in preaching the Gospel, it is argued that in accordance with Christ's command, men *have* gone to teach all nations. Geographically the Gospel *has been* preached around the world. Giant steps have been taken in terms of Christian unity through ecumenical understanding among Christian Churches.

All of these factors are, on the one hand, real advances, while on the other, they have a tendency to lure the less knowledgeable Catholic into apathy about the missions and missionaries. Stress on ecumenical activities has led some to believe that there is no longer any necessity to "convert" peoples, so why this "fuss" about missionary activity. In some quarters, stress on the new concept of sacramental theology and the inherent obligations of furthering the kingdom of Christ has resulted in a watered-down concept of the mission vocation. As a matter of fact, it has been de-emphasized to the extent that not a few have denied even the existence of a specific mission vocation. One might be tempted to conclude that missionaries are "has beens," that the day of the foreign missionary is done. And then came Vatican II.

In God's Providence, the Second Vatican Council in its *Decree on Missionary Activity* has given clear, definite and daring directives. The decree has reiterated the fact that the Church is missionary by its innermost nature. It states that there remains a gigantic missionary task to accomplish. It calls for a vivid realization of the necessity of presenting Christ and His Church to all men. Missionaries are meant to represent the solicitude of the Church for far-off peoples. The decree speaks of the universal mission vocation of all Catholics but emphasizes that "special missionary vocation," calling it a charismatic gift of God to a chosen few. The Fathers of the Council stress the importance of the missions and missionaries in strong terms, of our need to be "on fire" with the same love toward men with which Christ burned, of dynamism, initiative, intensification of our consciousness of the world's need for salvation, the necessity to go overseas to foreign lands, to help in all the social needs of men, to give Christ to them, to long to bring all men to the fullness of friendship with God.

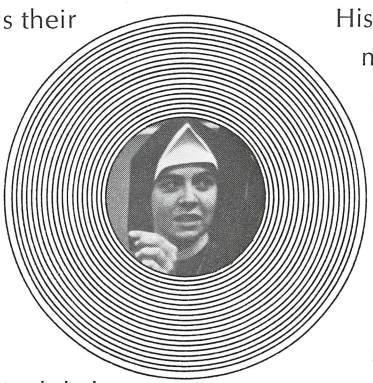
Vatican II issues challenges to missionaries. They aren't yesterday's challenges of distance and danger. They are today's demands for detachment of oneself and the acquisition of an intercultural mentality, one which necessitates being as objective as possible, leaving aside one's own cultural reference to accept the cultural values of a new nation. There are new risks, not so much of life and limb, but of adaptation in depth and the gift of self, not so much in the way that one might wish to give, but as others demand. The task of modern missionaries is a daily struggle, a continued effort to make the "Church an active presence within, native to the diverse and developing non-Christian culture in which it exists." It means that the missionary must more than ever before be the servant of the people in imitation of His Lord.

The missionary's day is not done! A new dawn is breaking. Vatican II calls for a new start, fresh impetus, stronger light, more savory salt.

Mission Sunday, 1966, is a fitting time to beseech God to reawaken in the hearts of all men a longing for the salvation of the world.

# JOY is like

At the core of any people is their creed, their art, their song. Man loves the things he sings about, sings out the things he loves. For the man of God rhythm, form, melody are choice and waiting channels for revealing the divine. God's Word becomes man's alphabet,



His themes, man's meat and meaning, His way, man's gift of song. God's Word is always timely. His message must be trumpeted with the apt tools of the times. In a weary, war-torn moment we sing of hope and healing we sing with joy our song.

**"The Gospel of Christ constantly renews the life and culture of fallen man. By riches coming from above, it makes fruitful, as it were from within, the spiritual qualities and traditions of every people and of every age. It strengthens, perfects and restores them in Christ."** The Church in the Modern World

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## INDIA

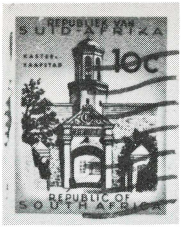
*Third Class—with Reservations*

My first introduction to life in India was a train ride from Calcutta to Patna. Sister Carmel met me in Calcutta. After a memorable taxi ride, during which we shaved several rickshaw drivers and probably amputated a few toes, we arrived at the railway station. I stood open-mouthed as the coolie swung my big bag onto his head and, with perfect balance, tossed the bed roll on top. Then he picked up the other forty pound bag in his hand and preceded us into the station.

Many minutes later we were settled in the train. Sister had told me we were going third class with sleeper reservations, but my imaginings were far worse than the reality. Sleeping reservations consisted of a compartment filled with eight shelves of wooden slabs on either side and a host of humanity. At first I thought Calcutta was being evacuated. But when the whistle blew, three-fourths of Calcutta left the train and the remaining quarter settled down in various positions. Sitting, squatting, standing or lying, Indians are always graceful.

We left Calcutta at 6:30 p.m. and then the fun began. We had to ask everyone in the compartment if we could have the top shelves and this involved consulting individually the four other passengers. The two across the aisle decided to use the top bunk for luggage and make a double bed from the bottom board. Describing what the luggage consisted of would take another letter, but the occupants of the double bed were a mass of brown arms and legs with bidding and heated discussion through the night. After repeated discussions on our side of the aisle we finally got the top two bunks on the side. With the query, "Ever been a girl scout?" and the answer, "No, but I can handle a few things," I was taught the intricacies of the bed roll. Actually, it was quite comfortable. There wasn't a dull moment during the night and I was grateful for my elevated perch many times. At one stop, another family moved in and Grandpa settled opposite me. He had a huge canvas parcel which he used as a pillow. It protruded across the aisle to within 8 inches of my nose. I tried holding my nose, breathing through my mouth and even ignoring the smell of the stable that arose from Grandpa's pillow, but without success. Scientists tell us that the olfactory sense is the first to weary, so with a prayer for weak synapse I rolled over and concluded that besides the love of God and a sense of humor one should add a strong stomach as a requirement for missionary life.

Sister M. Mathias, M.D.
Holy Family Hospital, Patna



## VIETNAM

*A Sister-Nurse Returns to Vietnam*

One of the men from Catholic Relief Services in Saigon met me at Tan-Son Nhut airport and I was able to get a military flight up to Quinhon the next day. The road from the airport in Saigon still bore charcoal scars from some sort of burning incident that morning. There were demonstrators' altars in the roads, burnings both in Saigon and Quinhon, and I was fortunate to have been able to get out of the one city and into the other so easily.

Medical Mission Sisters scrambled out from everywhere and nowhere as I drove into our compound in my sergeant-chauffeured jeep. We were first class entertainers for our OPD patients who said nothing, but who sat, stared and eventually smiled.

Quinhon looked a bit shabbier than before with the large number of refugees living everywhere. The roads are full of holes because of the heavy military traffic that has been continually passing over them. Of course, American soldiers are everywhere, in the air, on the ground and on the sea.

However, I don't think we are so far away. Can you believe it? The Sisters here already knew about our new record, "Joy Is Like The Rain," because Sister Elise had turned on the radio to the Armed Forces Station in Saigon and heard it advertised!

Now there is much work to be done for our sick here in Quinhon. Thanks to a wonderful furlough and all the nice things everyone did for me, I'm all set to dig in again. Please continue to pray for us here, especially for our people, who accept their suffering so well.

Sister M. Brendan
Holy Family Hospital, Quinhon

## EAST PAKISTAN

*Lazarus Luke*

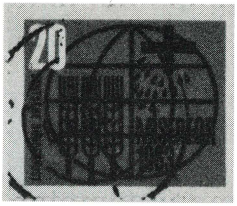
Our most exciting medical story of recent months was the successful exchange transfusion on the 4½-pound baby of one of our employees. They have only one other living child and their newest addition required four separate transfusions of "O" negative blood. We were so lucky we were able to get the blood. The baby is now several weeks old and doing fine. He was named Lazarus Luke! Sister Luke who delivered the baby is partly responsible for that.

Sister Marie Joan
Holy Family Hospital, Dacca

## WEST PAKISTAN

*A Laundryman's Child*

It is mid-summer here in Karachi



and life in the hospital is busy. There are so many sick children—fevers and dysenteries, pneumonias, croup and the usual smattering of other things. Some few always take a drink of kerosene when mother isn't looking. We have a laundryman's child who got hold of a bottle of acid! The poor child is not only scalded from his tongue on down to I don't know where, but he also spilled it on his lips, chin, tummy, knees and a bit on his feet. How we worked over him. First, we had to do a tracheotomy and later, a gastrostomy for the feedings, administer oxygen and I.V. drips, and hover over him day and night. He is a brave boy and now takes water by mouth, but it remains to be seen just how much damage he has inside.

Sister M. Martin
Holy Family Hospital, Karachi

## PHILIPPINES

*Report from Sulu*

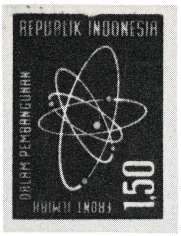
We are really involved here now. Sister Perpetua goes five days a week by speedboat to a different village every day, and sees and treats patients the whole morning long. The village people are the ones we aim to reach, as they do not bother to see a doctor even when they are very sick. They are not used to doctors or medicines. I see the occasional patient that comes to our temporary, one-room dispensary. The town people do not need another dispensary, as there are already five other doctors here with well established practices. What the people are looking forward to is the hospital. With a good hospital we can help patients from all these far-flung islands and from Borneo. The latter is only 75 miles from us. The workmen have begun clearing operations at the building site and construction of the water tank and wharf. It is a beautiful location, just outside the town. We can hardly wait for the building to go up.

Sister M. Scholastica
Bongao, Sulu

## INDIA

*A Plea for Rain*

Today, at long last, we had a little rain. Our wells have been getting lower and lower. The one we sunk a couple of years ago has been down to one foot of water for the past ten days, so our tractor has been going daily to the river to bring back tanks of water. We have only one well to service the hospital, nurses quarters, laundry and kitchen, and yesterday it measured three feet deep. You can see why we are grateful that the monsoon seems to be coming early this



year. Please pray that it will be a good one. The rice crops last year were very poor due to the scanty monsoons, and the people are so desperately in need of food.

Sister M. Maura
Holy Family Hospital, Mandar

## VENEZUELA

*Then Things Started Happening*

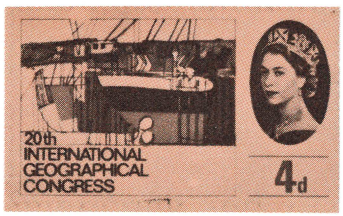
My most exciting adventure so far was our trip to the Motilone Indians who live at the foot of the mountains that form the Venezuela-Colombian border. After driving for about two hours over roads that kept getting progressively worse, we reached a place called Tucuco, where we transferred to a truck. Then things started happening. It had been raining a lot and the road was like nothing I've ever seen. One of the Indians, with steel nerves, was driving. At one point we had to go up a rather steep, long hill. The mud was at least a foot-and-a-half deep and the back wheels got stuck. We were at such an angle we could easily have turned front over back. The Capuchin Father who was taking us got out of the cab of the truck and gave us general absolution. And he was serious! But with the Sisters giving weight to the truck and the men pushing, we made it through that crisis.

I thought that other places I had visited were isolated but this was really in the middle of nowhere. The only signs of civilization were ads for Orange Crush and Canada Dry. We kept driving on the same "road" for another hour-and-a-half until there was no more road. Then we started walking through the jungle behind Father. The banana trees completely cut out the noonday sun. When we came to a river nearly 500 feet wide with no way to get across, in we went! It had a strong current and varied in depth. The deepest part came up to my shoulders. At first we were laughing so hard, we could hardly walk. The bottom of the river was full of small and large stones and we kept slipping off. Then in our dripping clothes we walked through more jungle, through mud, over logs and thick underbrush.

The priest who was with us was the first white man to successfully meet the Motilones and live to tell the tale. In July, 1960, after a long preparation, he was dropped from a helicopter with food and clothes. His salvation was the fact that the tribe was divided about whether he should live or die. The "live" group won, obviously. After he successfully opened the way, other Capuchins followed in his footsteps.

Sister M. Isabelle
Our Lady of Coromoto Hospital,
Maracaibo

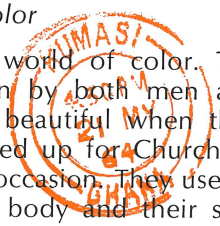
■ **INDIA**—PATNA, MANDAR, BOMBAY, NEW DELHI, POONA, KODARMA, THURUTHIPURAM ■ **VIETNAM**—QUINHON



■ **INDIA**—BHARANANGANAM, CHANGANACHERRY, KOTTAYAM, ITHITHANAM, MUNDAKAYAM ■ **PHILIPPINES**—LIPA CIT

## GHANA

*World of Color*




This is a world of color. The clothes worn by both men and women are beautiful when they are all dressed up for Church or some other occasion. They use an oil on their body and their skin shines like ebony.

On Fridays, market day, there is much moving and carrying going on. Wares to be sold are stacked high on the heads of the people and carried very gracefully. The loads they can carry are unbelievable. One day a man was carrying a big table on his head with everything to be sold prearranged on top of it. Nothing moved or fell off, believe it or not.

On our way to the parish Church each morning for Mass, we pass through the village. At that hour of the morning we see people in all manner of dress and undress, some getting their baths, others soaped up, literally from head to foot. When clean water is poured over them, they just shine. Fires are being built and fanned to prepare for the morning meal. Some mammies are busy sweeping the compound, usually with Junior on their backs, while others are nursing their youngest. Chickens, goats and dogs are going about the business of trying to find something to eat. We see all this and much more each day, but somehow, the reality and charm of it can never be captured on paper. That third dimension is lacking.

Sister M. de Lellis
Holy Family Hospital, Techiman

## KENYA

*A New Theology?*

Father was telling us some of the answers he receives from the children when teaching them catechism. When he asked: "Who is the Fourth Person of the Trinity?"—one little boy answered: "Amen."

Sister M. Patricia
Holy Family Hospital, Nangina


YOUR WILL

Your will can help the Medical Mission Sisters bring Christlike charity through their medical work to areas of greatest need around the world. The following approved form of bequest may be used:

*"I hereby give (devise) and bequeath to the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries (also known as the Medical Mission Sisters), an institution incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland, and its successors forever the sum of $_____ for its purposes."*

*If you have already made your will, it is not necessary to make a new one. It is sufficient that a codicil be added, using the above.*

# HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS

India's Health Ministry said 50,000 people may die from cholera during the next 12 to 18 months. The disease is expected to strike 200,000 people during the epidemic, which is covering much of southern Asia.

AMA NEWS
June 27, 1966

A significant step toward the creation of an Indian liturgy was taken by Jesuit seminarians at Poona when they conducted an artfully composed, all-Indian, prayer service on *Divali* night (Feast of Lights). A moving ceremony was centered on the theme of Christ, Light of the World, and was replete with Indian hymns and prayers based on the Bible and the Hindu Scriptures.

The sanctuary, beautifully adorned with a large-sized OM—the symbol of the Almighty—was aglow with decorative Indian lamps as the priest entered barefooted to incense the *Deepak* installed in front of the altar. The congregation then moved up, chanting psalms, to light their tapers at the *Deepak*. The service reached its climax when the congregation paid homage to Christ, the Light of India, by way of symbolic offerings of a coconut, sandal paste, *kumkum* and fruits.

This service is part of a larger plan wherein it is proposed that Christian feasts be brought in line with national feasts and be celebrated in a typically Indian rite. Seminaries and scholasticates in India are considered the most suited places to carry out experiments in such liturgical practices and adaptations, which will ultimately pave the way for a genuine Indian liturgy and theology.

THE HERALD
November 12, 1965

A review of the entire life of the Church in Ghana and the start of a council that would include the active participation of all Catholics was called for by the bishops of Ghana. In a joint pastoral letter the bishops cited the need for special lessons and courses in Christian social doctrine in all schools and organizations "to remind us of the aims and purposes of all cultural, economic and political activity: the true happiness of the human person in harmony with his human and eternal dignity."

LONG ISLAND CATHOLIC
July 17, 1966

"For man culture is the ideal of human perfection toward which he aspires as an individual and as a social personality. It is the har-

# HIGHLIGHTS

monious development of the whole man and of every man. Culture cannot be, nor has it ever been, the isolated development of individual faculties. Culture is something all-embracing. It involves the full growth and maturation of the whole man in each man. A human being is so complex that there is always the risk of neglecting one of his constitutive elements. He is, at one and the same time, science and art, love and action, technology and political life; he is also adoration and prayer, infinite religious striving and specific established religion. Man's steps have been faltering, his pilgrimage has been long in search of this fullness of culture throughout the centuries."

Pedro Arrupe, S.J.
CATHOLIC MIND
March, 1966

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible."

Mahatma Gandhi

The missionary problem no longer arises in terms of geographical penetration, but in terms of the penetration of cultures. In the first place, it is a matter of studying and using proper methods to achieve Christian penetration of a given environment. The environment must be assimilated along with its mentality, sensibility, and language, as perfectly as possible. The positive preparations for evangelization already present must be taken into account. One must go into its faults, particularly the human uncertainties which only preaching of the Gospel can resolve, arousing these uncertainties if necessary. One must play one's part in the efforts universally unfolding to raise the standards of human life, according to the Christian vision of things.

WORLD CAMPUS
January, 1966

"Joy is the characteristic and indispensable mark of Christian life and a state of grace. A Christian can be devoid of everything else; but if he is a Christian united to God in faith and charity, he cannot be devoid of joy. Repeatedly St. Paul reminds us of our obligation: 'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.'"

POPE PAUL VI

# & INSIGHTS

*MARY: the glory of her heritage, the honor of her people*

Mr. & Mrs. Frank McGinnis
629 3rd Ave.
Troy, NY 12182

Here is my
$_____
contribution for
your Mandar hospital.

Signed: _____

**MEDICAL MISSION SISTERS ■ PHILADELPHIA, PENNA. 19111**

At Holy Family Hospital, Mandar, India, Sister Pascal's worries as administrator go deep—as deep as the well, the source of water for the hospital. "... one whole side caved in last month and calls for major repairs." Here where people struggle daily for enough food to keep alive, water is vital for each day's needs—in fact, for life itself! You can't have a hospital without it. Your help is desperately needed.